

record. Setting aside yesterday's proposal, the fact is that 45 Senate Republicans—including Leader MCCONNELL—remain cosponsors of another nationwide abortion ban previously introduced by the Senator from South Carolina.

Leader MCCONNELL himself told USA Today earlier this year that without Roe, proposals for a nationwide ban on abortions were now “possible,”—his words—“possible” if Republicans controlled the Senate. Do the American people want that? Do they want MCCONNELL, Leader MITCH MCCONNELL, to be majority leader and work to impose a nationwide ban on abortions? I don't think so.

Now, they are sort of running away from what their real beliefs are, but they are like the dog who caught the bus. For years they pushed to make this happen, unfortunately, to the detriment of over 100 million American women. It happened, and now they don't know quite what to do.

They are not backing off their horrible MAGA principles, but they want to hide from it at the same time because they know how unpopular it is.

And to show you just where the party is at, almost immediately after the Court overturned Roe, Mike Pence, former Republican Vice President, now running for President possibly in 2024 said Republicans “must not rest” until abortion is illegal everywhere. That means a nationwide ban. That doesn't leave it up to the States.

In fact, he doubled down on just this last night, saying a national abortion ban “is profoundly more important” than Republicans' short-term interests. That is one of the leaders of the Republican Party, which has moved so far to the right that even someone like Pence, who doesn't always go along with Trump, feels compelled to take that extreme position.

And lest we forget, folks, nearly every Senate Republican—nearly every Senate Republican—already voted to push national abortion bans in 2020, in 2018, and 2015. During one of these votes, the Senator from South Carolina, who introduced the nationwide ban again yesterday, said:

These pieces of legislation will continue to be advanced until they pass.

How do we know that Republicans will put a national abortion ban on the floor if they control the Senate? Not only has Senator GRAHAM committed to doing it, they have done it before, three times. And they will do it again if they get the majority. America, beware. America, beware.

So the truth is not hard to grasp. Republicans do not care about leaving abortion in the hands of the States. No way. They do not care that a majority of Americans supported Roe and support abortion rights.

What MAGA Republicans care about deep down is eliminating freedom of choice across America, period. And they are already at work right now on legislation, as we heard yesterday, that

will take us down that terrible, terrible path.

Well, it is my view that the American people aren't going to be fooled by Republicans' desperate attempts to seem mainstream. You can't fake your way through an issue so personal and so important as a woman's right to make her own healthcare choices. They are not going to be able to run and duck and bob and weave and tie themselves in pretzel knots. Everyone knows where they are at. LINDSEY GRAHAM made it clear again yesterday. And people will know the Republican view: abolish abortion everywhere. That is not going to change no matter what some on the other side might think.

INFLATION REDUCTION ACT OF 2022

Mr. President, now, on the positive impacts of the Democratic agenda, a much happier note. As I said a moment ago, while MAGA Republicans spent yesterday touting their extreme agenda, Democrats focused on the things that matter most right now to the American people: lowering costs, creating good-paying jobs, and protecting our planet for future generations.

The Inflation Reduction Act has not been law for even a month—not just a month—and already it is spurring new investments that will generate years, if not decades, of robust economic activity, in industries that will stay here in America—here in America, not in China, not anywhere else—for a very long time.

A remarkable number of companies in the energy, automotive, and clean tech sectors have announced that they are either approving or accelerating new plans to grow their businesses.

One of the most significant areas of activity is happening in EVs and battery manufacturing, so crucial to meeting our country's growing demand for electric vehicles. China has dominated battery manufacturing for too long, and we are bringing these jobs back to America—not just talking about it, doing it.

Honda and LG, for instance, have teamed up to invest \$4 billion for a new battery plant with an annual production of 40 GWh.

Hyundai, meanwhile, has announced they might actually accelerate their timetable for building new state-of-the-art EV and battery plants in Savannah, GA. Plans called for getting started early next year, and now they are saying it could happen sooner. And it is the votes of people and the activity of people like RAPHAEL WARNOCK and JON OSSOFF that have made that happen.

Of course, the benefits of our bill extend well beyond EVs and batteries. Solar Energy Industries Association projects that by 2027, the U.S. solar market will grow 40 percent more than expected thanks to the Inflation Reduction Act. And numerous companies focused on renewables, carbon capture, and heat pumps are announcing a flurry of investments, very often citing our bill—now law—the IRA.

All of these examples share something important: These are the jobs of tomorrow. These industries are going to stick around for decades as our country makes the transition away from fossil fuels and towards cleaner forms of energy. The impacts will be felt everywhere. It is going to take millions of workers to build these vehicles, reshape our infrastructure, and install these technologies in our homes and offices.

And because so much of this will be done by union labor, these will be good-paying jobs, at good wages, with good benefits, lifting up the middle class, keeping those who are in the middle class there and allowing many others who are climbing that ladder to get into the middle class and stay there. It is a wonderful and beautiful thing. In a certain sense we did the right thing making sure our planet doesn't burn up, but it had so many other effects, like good-paying jobs and strengthening the middle class.

And had we not taken action to encourage these investments, it is likely many of these jobs would end up going overseas to Asia, to Europe. America would have lost out. Instead, we have a real chance to lead the way again.

This is the result of Democrats leading the way here in Congress. We are proud, every one of us is proud of the steps we have taken to lower energy costs, to create jobs that have a real future in this country, and to give working families a chance to climb up those ladders and get into that middle class.

It is all about restoring that sunny American optimism that has been at the core of our economic prosperity for so long, that some felt had passed us by; but, no, we Democrats said it hasn't passed us by. The best of our future is yet to come.

RESPECT FOR MARRIAGE ACT

Mr. President, on marriage equality, over the past few months, both sides have engaged in good-faith conversations about how to pass marriage equality into law. I truly hope, for the sake of tens of millions of Americans, that there will be at least 10 Republicans who will vote with us to pass this important bill soon.

Democrats are ready to make it happen and willing to debate reasonable compromises on the specifics, so I urge my colleagues on the other side to join us. Around the country, the feeling is sinking in that this is a dark time for individual rights, so codifying marriage equality is one of the best things we can do to provide peace of mind to millions of Americans who are gay Americans, LGBTQ Americans who are married, and to their families, to their friends. It extends way beyond the individual couple who is married. It is an issue that hits home for many of us in this Chamber, including me.

If we ever find ourselves in the awful situation of having marriage equality overturned by the Supreme Court, I dare say the vast majority of us would

see impacts in our own personal lives or the personal lives of our close family and friends in one way or another.

It would be risky and perhaps foolish to think that such a day could never come. Maybe a few months ago people would think that, no more. Justice Thomas put his cards on the table. He said that he is very open that the Supreme Court's decision protecting same-sex marriage should, in fact, be reconsidered. And often when Justice Thomas says it, his other four MAGA Republican Supreme Court colleague Justices are thinking the same thing.

To anyone who says that the High Court would never be so reckless as to overturn a decision that has protected this fundamental right of millions of people, all I say to this is: Wake up. Look what they did in the Dobbs decision.

Passing marriage equality in the Senate is all about making sure such a danger never—never—materializes. Millions of Americans, tens of millions of Americans will breathe a huge sigh of relief if we do this. And it is the right thing to do.

We know that America has trod on the long path towards greater equality. We know that when the Constitution was written, millions of Americans were enslaved. In many States, you had to be a White male Protestant property owner to vote, that would leave the presiding officer and me out. They know that, and they know that most Americans are proud that we have made progress.

There are some dark forces encapsulated, embodied in the MAGA Republicans, so many of whom are in this Chamber, who want to take steps backward. We are not going to let it happen. We shouldn't let it happen.

So I truly hope, for the sake of tens of millions of Americans, that there will be at least 10 Republicans who will vote with us to pass this very, very important bill.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

INFLATION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, the American people's No. 1 priority is runaway inflation that is smashing their family budgets and crushing our economy.

Yesterday, the latest inflation report showed that soaring prices are still completely out of control. Inflation has totaled 13.2 percent since the day President Biden took office. We just had the worst 12 months for both food inflation and electricity inflation since the fallout from the Carter administration.

President Biden and our Democratic colleagues chose to celebrate—celebrate—this awful inflation report with a so-called inflation reduction party yesterday at the White House. While the Dow Jones plummeted over 1,000 points, while the S&P 500 lost more

than 4 percent of its value in 1 day, while American families can't afford gas, groceries, or electricity, Washington Democrats partied on the White House lawn to celebrate their policies. That is what happened yesterday.

This is what Democrats do while our economy crumbles. They subsidize luxury electric cars; they make plumbers and retail workers eat the graduate school debt of doctors and lawyers; and they throw a party for themselves on the White House lawn.

CRIME

Mr. President, now on an entirely different matter, when you combine the border crisis and the violent crime crisis, law and order ranks as the American people's No. 2 priority, second only to the inflation crisis.

While Democrats' economic policies have waged war on working families' financial security, their soft-on-crime policies have eroded America's physical security. Cities, towns, and neighborhoods across the country are reeling from a wave of violent crime. Just last weekend my State, Kentucky, experienced a spate of murders and attempted murders that rattled residents and literally overwhelmed the police.

Lexington saw four separate shooting incidents on Saturday night alone, leaving nine hurt, some with life-threatening injuries. A Lexington Police Department veteran described it as "a pretty much unprecedented night in my 20 years." Officers were so tied up that they were unable to respond to other crimes and disorder.

Louisville also saw a flurry of violence; the second highest number of homicides in one weekend this year; six people murdered in just 3 days.

Both cities documented record homicide numbers last year, and Lexington is on track to do so again. For Louisville, this is the third consecutive year of triple-digit killings.

Now, of course, this crisis isn't just hitting Kentucky. These trends are nationwide.

For years, the far left has impugned the motives and honor of police officers and taken aim at their funding.

For years, top liberal donors have poured money into campaigns of radical district attorneys from big cities whose whole stated agenda is to not prosecute crimes.

For years, Democratic elites have pushed for letting violent criminals out of prison. Democrats just nominated and confirmed a Supreme Court Justice who argued as a DC district judge that COVID justified—listen to this—letting every single prisoner in Washington, DC, custody out of jail and back on the streets.

This has been an intentional, strategic campaign from the far left, and now Americans are being robbed, carjacked, assaulted, and murdered. Their families are being poisoned with illegal drugs.

Just weeks ago, Senator RUBIO gave the Senate a vote to increase funding for fighting crime and keeping dan-

gerous criminals locked up. Every Senate Republican supported this; every Democrat joined on party lines to block it.

Later today, our colleagues from Tennessee will hold a press conference to discuss the horrifying case of Eliza Fletcher, a 34-year-old mom and teacher in Memphis, whom a career criminal forced into an SUV and murdered while she was out for her morning run. The suspect had multiple violent crimes on his rap sheet dating back to age 14 and had just been let out of prison early for a prior kidnapping.

So there are far too many tragic stories like Eliza Fletcher's being written every day and every week all across our country.

Entire neighborhoods have become unwalkable. In many places, public transit has become nearly unusable.

A few months ago, the Washington Post profiled 1 day in the life of a female immigrant busdriver in Denver who gets screamed at and threatened by lunatics on a daily basis.

Just yesterday, a 49-year-old was stabbed in the back while riding the subway in New York City after he asked another passenger to just quiet down.

Our Democratic friends like to talk about fairness and compassion. There is nothing fair or compassionate about letting cities descend into violence and chaos. There is nothing fair or compassionate about legislating like career criminals deserve fifth and sixth chances more than young mothers deserve the right to go out for a morning jog and come home alive.

Stable prices, reliable energy, secure borders, and basic public safety are four of the most basic duties that any government in a civilized country owes its citizens. These things are the absolute minimum that American families ought to be able to count on—the bare minimum—and the Democrats' one-party government cannot deliver it.

UKRAINE

Mr. President, on another matter, it has been encouraging to see good news regarding the Ukrainian people's fight to defend or reclaim their sovereignty.

Latest reports indicate that Ukraine has recently liberated 2,400 square miles of their own territory from Russian hands.

The sight of a democratic nation beating back totalitarian aggression continues to inspire the free world. It should make other thugs think twice about following in Putin's footsteps. But, obviously, it is not nearly time to ease up. An axis of authoritarians is still pushing hard for Ukraine to fail.

Iran is equipping the Russian military with armed drones like the ones they and their proxies have used against American forces in Syria and Iraq and against our Israeli, Emirati, and Saudi partners.

North Korea is reportedly refilling Russia's artillery stockpiles, and the PRC has publicly supported Moscow's narrative through every Russian atrocity.